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Mac Cathmhaoil, N. (2016). 'A Poem in Praise of Aodh Óg Mag Mathghamhna'. *Éigse: A Journal of Irish Studies*, 39(2016), 44-70.

[Link to publication record in Ulster University Research Portal](#)

Published in:

Éigse: A Journal of Irish Studies

Publication Status:

Published (in print/issue): 01/05/2016

Document Version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

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A POEM IN PRAISE OF
AODH ÓG MAG MATHGHAMHNA (d. 1496)*

MS COPIES

The poem *Fa chroidhe cumthar flaitheas* is preserved in two MSS, RIA 24 P 4, pp 257–61 (*P*) and in BL Add. 40,766, ff 15–18 (*A*). Manuscript *P* was written around 1687 and contains a copy of the Stowe recension of Táin Bó Cuailnge, a prose tract on the rights of the Mac Mahons, poems on the Mac Mahons and other miscellaneous matter.¹ The scribe of this manuscript was Padruic Mac Oghannan.² According to Flower,³ Manuscript *A* was written near the end of the seventeenth century in Fermanagh, and contains both classical poetry and post-classical poetry of the seventeenth century. A semi-diplomatic edition of this poem has been published in *Bard.Misc* (no. 214) from manuscript *P*.⁴

AODH ÓG MAG MATHGHAMHNA (†1496)

The subject of this poem, Aodh Óg mac Aodha Ruaidh Mhig Mhathghamhna had an eventful life that is fairly well documented in the annals.⁵ He must have been born by 1453, as his father Aodh Ruadh

* For comments and suggestions made in the preparation of this article, I am grateful to two anonymous readers, to Dr Máire Nic Cathmhaoil and to my colleagues Dr A. J. Hughes, Dr P. J. Smith and Prof. Ailbhe Ó Corráin. I alone am responsible for any faults that remain.

¹ See *RIA Cat.* pp 272–5 for a full description of this manuscript. Two of the Mag Mathghamhna poems from this MS have been edited and translated by Hughes (1987, 1993).

² I have not found this surname recorded elsewhere. It may be a version of Mac Eoghanáin, which has been anglicised as Mac Cohenan, McOwenan, McConan and McKeonnan. Some of this family lived around Magherlin Parish in the Barony of Iveagh Lower, Upper Half, in County Down. This same parish is close to Lurgan town in County Armagh, where the patron Arthur Brownlow lived around the end of the seventeenth century. It was for this patron that Mac Oghannan wrote MS RIA 24 L 36 in the year 1685 (*RIA Cat.*, pp 385–6).

³ *BL Cat II*, p. 161. For a recent discussion of this MS, see Ó Macháin, pp 106–9.

⁴ This edition has been invaluable in preparing the present paper. My readings from this manuscript, however, differ from those in the *Bard.Misc* edition at 21b (torchar > torcar); 25c (meallfas > mheallfas); 27a (eis > éis); 28b (hardri > ardri); 32b (furthacht > furtacht); 34b (Conqubhair > Conarbhair) and 35bd (choiméd > choiméad); 41d (an rí > na rí).

⁵ The foregoing is based on entries from the annals, citations from which are given here in chronological order: *AFM* 1453.1; *ALC* 1453.1; *AU* 1466.5; *AFM* 1466.17; *AC* 1466.26; *AC* 1475.20; *AC* 1484.3; *AFM* 1485.11; *AFM* 1486.35; *AFM* 1493.12; *AFM* 1494.8; *AU* 1496.1; *ALC* 1496.3; *AC* 1496.4; *AU* 1496.21; *AFM* 1496.1; *AU* 1496.25; *AFM* 1496.3; *AU* 1496.22; *AFM* 1496.2–3; *AU* 1496.31; *AU* 1496.36; *AU* 1496.37; *AFM* 1496.4; *AU* 1497.21.

mac Rughruidhe Mag Mathghamhna, King of Oirghialla, died in that year. In 1466, Aodh Ruadh was captured by the foreigners of Meath after they defeated Feidhlimidh Mag Mathghamhna in battle. It is not clear whether he was with his brother(s) and the foreigners of *Machaire Oirghiall*, 'The Plain of Oriel', when they defeated the King of Oirghialla Réamann Mag Mathghamhna and captured him in 1475. This defeat of Réamann Mag Mathghamhna of Lucht Tighe, or Longfort Mhig Mhathghamhna in the barony of Monaghan, instigated an internecine feud between the north county Monaghan 'Lucht Tighe' Mag Mathghamhna group and the Farney group of the family in the southeast of the county, who were descended from Aodh Ruadh mac Rughruidhe Mag Mathghamhna (†1453).

In 1478, Aodh Óg, a Farney Mag Mathghamhna, continued the feud with the Lucht Tighe group by raiding the lands of Brian mac Réamainn Mag Mathghamhna and capturing him.⁶ In 1483, Réamann mac Rughruidhe Mag Mathghamhna, King of Oriel, died in captivity in Drogheda and his nephew, our Aodh Óg rose to the kingship the following year. In 1486, he spoiled eighteen towns in *Galldacht Mhachaire Airghiall*, 'The *Galltacht* of the Plain of Oriel', and in 1493 he allied himself with Éinri Óg Ó Néill and Aodh mac Airt Mag Aonghasa to battle against Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill at the Mournes in Down. The next year, he joined [Seán mac Cathail] Ó Raghallaigh to defeat the English.

The year 1496 brought an escalation of the feud between the Lucht Tighe and Farney groups of the Mag Mathghamhna family that would prove fatal for Aodh Óg. It began with his sons, Giolla Pádraig and Rughruidhe, along with sixteen *sgológa*, 'farmers', murdering their cousin Glaisne mac Rughruidhe Mag Mathghamhna in Monaghan castle on the night of the eleventh of January. In the beginning of the summer of the year, Brian mac Réamainn Mag Mathghamhna burned the town of Aodh Óg at Lurgans in the parish of Magheross in the barony of Farney. Around the same time, the Uí Anluain murdered Aodh Óg's son, Giolla Pádraig, and another of his sons, Eimer, was captured. Aodh Óg then fled to the protection of Ó Raghallaigh and the English, while Brian mac Réamainn Mag Mathghamhna and the sons of the murdered Glaisne, with the aid of Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill, moved from their territory in northern Monaghan into Aodh Óg's lands in Farney. Before the eighteenth of April in 1496, Aodh Óg had been

⁶ For discussion on the Lucht Tighe and Farney Mc Mahons, see Moore pp 22-9 and Ó Dufáigh and Duffy p. 11.

blinded,⁷ and Brian mac Réamainn had been inaugurated as Mag Mathghamhna. Aodh Óg died on the feast day of Mary in Winter in December of the same year. The occupation of Farney by the Lucht Tighe group, however, was to be shortlived, as they were replaced there in the following years by the descendants of Aodh Ruadh Mag Mathghamhna and once more returned to north Monaghan.

AUTHORSHIP

In *A f.* 15b, the poem is ascribed to 'Tadhg o Higinn'. This cannot be the prolific Tadhg Óg Ó Huiginn, who died in 1448, but may be the Tadhg Ó Huiginn whose father Brian died in 1476.⁸ There are no other poems extant that can be attributed to this Tadhg [mac Briain] Ó Huiginn with any certainty. In manuscript *P* p. 257, the poem is attributed to an 'Ó Fáolan'. It seems unlikely, though not impossible, that the poet suggested here was a member of the Ó Faoláin family who were once a sept of the Déise⁹ and who were to become populous in southern Ireland.¹⁰ This family were not known to have been poets during the Classical era, but were involved to an extent in Irish learning in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A 'Séamus Ó Faoláin' is mentioned as a possible scribe or collaborator on p. 83 of medical manuscript RIA 23 N 17, written in 1562 at 'Baile an Airrséaraigh', or Archerstown, par. Rahelty, bar. Eliogarty, Co. Tipperary, and a 'Tomás Ua Faoláin' made a copy of *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* in RIA MS 23 Q 14 in 1662 in Tullamoylin, par. Ballynaclogh, bar. Ormond Upper, Co. Tipperary.

An alternative explanation may be that the scribe adopted the spelling *Ó Fáolan* for *Ó Fialáin*, and that this change in spelling has come about due to analogy with the spelling of the more widespread *Ó Fáolan* / *Ó Faoláin*. If this were the case, it would seem that the poet

⁷Blinding and mutilation were seen in Medieval Ireland and England as a way of eliminating political enemies. See, for example the eulogistic entry on the death of An Croibhdheirg Ó Conchubhair in *AC* 1224.1: *Ri is mo dorondi di crechaib & do loscib ar Gallaib & Gaidelaib bitis ina agaid; Ri is crodae & is antrenta re hescardib tianicc riam; Ri is mo ro dall & ro marb acus ro chirph do merlichib & d'escardib na rige* 'the king who carried out most plunderings and burnings against Galls and Gaels who opposed him; the king who was the fiercest and harshest towards his enemies that ever lived; the king who most blinded, killed and mutilated rebellious and disaffected subjects'. For a general discussion of mutilation in Medieval Ireland, see Gillingham, pp 115, 118–19, 125–8 and 129–30. The purpose of this mutilation was to exclude the enemy as a potential rival king (Kelly, p. 19; Simms 1987, pp 50–2). Another notable case of mutilation in the fifteenth century is that of Brian Óg mac Bhriain mhic Éinrí Aimirídh Ó Néill, for whom see Ó Riain 2010.

⁸*TD* I, table preceding p. xiii. His obit does not appear in any of the annals.

⁹*FFÉ* §34.

¹⁰de Bhulbh, s.v. *Phelan, Whelan*.

suggested here was one of the Uí Fhialáin, several of whom who were poets to Maguire and were *erenaghs* of 'Botha Mhuintir Fhialáin' / 'Both Uí Fhialáin' i.e. modern-day Boho, bar. Magheraboy, Co. Fermanagh.¹¹ There were a number of poets with this surname in the fifteenth and early sixteenth century who could be potential authors of this poem, these being Seán Ó Fialáin (†1483),¹² Eogan (mac Eogain) Ó Fialáin (†1489)¹³ and Ferghal (mac Eoghain) Ó Fialáin (†1510),¹⁴ who seems to have been the last of the Ó Fialáin poets who had his obit recorded in the annals.¹⁵

TRANSMISSION AND EDITION OF TEXT

Only 36 of the 41 quatrains of the poem extant in *P* are contained in *A*, these being 1–6, 8–9, 11–13, 15–39. The order of the quatrains is slightly different in the two MSS in that *P* has q. 17 before qq 15–16. I have opted for the ordering of quatrains found in *A* for this part of the poem, as it offers greater narrative continuity in that q. 15 below continues the idea in q. 14, while q. 18 picks up the theme of q. 17. The two copies of the poem differ from each other quite significantly, and the edition of the text given below is a composite one. Some sound variants offering differences in meaning are found in the two manuscripts, i.e. (the preferred reading is given here in brackets) at 1c (*A*), 2b (*A*), 3d (*A*), 16c (*A*), 18d (*P*), 19a (*P*), 21b (*P*), 21c (*A*), 33a (*A*), 34c (*A*), 35d (*P*), 38a (*P*). Both manuscripts were written in the post-Classical period and contain some unique unmetrical and ungrammatical readings, i.e. at 1cd (*P*), 2b (*AP*), 3a (*A*), 4a (*A*), 5a (*A*), 6b (*A*), 7cd (*P*), 9ab (*P*), 10ab (*P*), 11ab (*P*), 12b (*A*), 15b (*P*), 16cd (*P*), 18b (*A*), 18d (*A*), 17ab (*P*), 19cd (*P*), 20ab (*P*), 20cd (*PA*), 22a (*A*), 22d (*A*), 24cd (*P*), 25b (*A*), 25cd (*A*), 26cd (*P*), 31cd (*P*), 33b (*A*), 33cd (*P*), 35ab (*P*), 38cd (*A*), 39b (*P*). In these instances, the reading chosen was that which adhered to Classical Irish orthography and grammar, and

¹¹ The Uí Fhialáin were still *erenaghs* in Boho at the time of the inquisition of 1607 (*MGF*, 108).

¹² *AU* 1483.5; *AC* 1483.3; *ALC* 1483.2.

¹³ *AU* 1489.38; *AFM* 1489.73; *ALC* 1489.3.

¹⁴ *AU* 1510; *AFM* 1510.6; *ALC* 1510.1; *AC* 1510.4.

¹⁵ It is possible that these poets were ousted from their position as *ollaimh* to Maguire by the Uí Eodhasa (Hughes 1994, 77–8). The last of the Ó Fialáin poets whose poems have come down to us may be Donnchadh Ó Fialáin who wrote *Fada an turas tug Eamhuin* for Feidhlim son of Fiach Ó Broin and *Beannacht ag Baile na Corra* for another unknown member of the O'Byrne family in Co. Wicklow. For these poems see *L.Bran* nos 36, 56. This poet is most likely the same 'Donogh O Fylan' of Donore in the parish of Multyfarnam in Corkaree barony in Co. Westmeath who was pardoned in 1601 (O'Rahilly 1921–24, §21).

met the requirements of the metre. In places where both manuscripts give readings that are unmetrical and / or ungrammatical, the text has been restored to Classical norms as found in *IGT* and *BST*.

The requirements of the *deibhidhe* metre are fulfilled throughout the present edition except at q. 39a, which is hypermetrical, and at qq 8c, 41a, which have no alliteration.

In preparing this edition, the customary editorial conventions as found in *TD I* pp xciv–xcviii have been adopted, with the following amendments:

- (i) final unstressed *-i* has been rendered as *-e*;
- (ii) proper nouns have not been lenited without manuscript support;
- (iii) where the two manuscripts give different readings for initial lenition, the readings which adhere to the rules in McKenna 1941 have been preferred;
- (iv) *-úa*, *-ía*, *-éo* and *-áo*, have been rendered as *-ua*, *-ia*, *-eo* and *-ao*.

All true variant readings from the manuscripts are given at the bottom of each page of the text. In these readings, all manuscript abbreviations, including lenition marks, are expanded in italic script. A discussion is supplied in the textual notes on significant differences in readings between the two manuscripts.

THE TEXT

1. Fa chroidhe cumthar flaitheas,
sgaruid cách re comhaitheas;
roinn gach neith dá bhfoighe fear,
i leith a chroidhe cuirtheas.
2. Flaitheas cumtha fa chridhe
gé tá ag gach aon d'áiridhe;
ní hé a chiall go bhfoighe fear
mian a chroidhe acht le caitheamh.

TRANSLATION

1. A kingdom is apportioned according to generosity – let all people abandon the laws of inheritance, for the share of all things a man may obtain is [rather] granted to him on account of his generosity.
2. Although a kingdom apportioned according to generosity is in store for every man, this does not mean that a man may receive his heart's desire just to consume it.

Headings: Tadg o higinn .cc. A; Ó Fáolan .cc. P

- 1 c rún g. P neithe P
- 2 a achroidhe A b atá P agghach A ag aon P c hé chiall A bhfuighe MSS
d mian croidhe A

3. Ón chroidhe is cuid dá thoradh,
tig gach maith do mhéadoghadh;
tig don maitheas do-ní neach
a fhlaithneas go mbí ar biseach.
4. Gion gur comhthrom re croidhe
maitheas meic mheic Rughroidhe,
a mhaitheas téid i dtarbha
do fhlaithneas Mhéig Mhathghamhna.
5. Niorbh fuláir d'fhior a chroidhe
Éire Inis Laoghoire;
ní bu creite dár chan sinn,
dá rabh ar eite d'Éirinn.
6. An treas cuid do chlár Banbha
atá i gceart Mhéig Mhathghamhna;
do bhiadh a chroidhe ós cionn
dhá dtrian oile na hÉirionn.
7. Dá measdaoi méad a chroidhe
re flaithios Fhóid Iughoine,
feadh troighe ní théid Banbha
tar chroidhe Mhéig Mhathghamhna.

3. [For] from generosity – that is part of its fruits – , all produce can be increased; improvement in a man's kingdom comes from the good that he does.
4. Although the wealth of the grandson of Rudhroighe is not equal to his generosity, his goodness benefits the kingdom of McMahon.
5. Ireland, Laoghaire's Isle, would not be too much for a man of his generosity. What we have stated ought not to be credited were he on some periphery (i.e. in some outlying area) of Ireland.
6. One third of *Banbha's* plain is Mag Mathghamhna's by right, [as] his generosity has been greater than all that of the other two thirds of Ireland.
7. If the extent of his generosity were compared with the kingdom of Ireland, [it would be found that] Ireland does not exceed Mag Mathghamhna's heart by the length of a single foot.

3 a ccroidhe A as cuid P c mhaitheas P

4 a gurab A b mhic mhic A c attarbha A d mhaitheas mh. P

5 a dfear A c bú P creidthe A: creidte P d mbeith A

6 b tá A mheig Mathghamhna P

7 d mheig (quatrain missing in A)

8. Gach connradh dá raibhe riamh
a hÉirinn d'fhearuibh Oirghiall,
dá bhfaghadh ní hé ghéabhas
gabhadh an té thoigéaras.
9. Connradh nach inleanta air,
dá leantaoi lorg a sochair;
connradh nach dtéid i dtarbha,
gan chongnamh Mhéig Mhathghamhna.
10. Minic do míneaghadh lais
anuabhar fhir an díomais;
téid an t-uabhar in umhla,
ar uamhan Mhéig Mhathghamhna.
11. Ní hionmhaoite d'fhior a ghníomh
guala nó uille airdríogh,
's níor bheag d'anáir uadha soin,
guala d'fhagháil 'ná haghaidh.
12. Bráighe re beagán umhla,
dá sirtheá ar Mhag Mathghamhna,
a ghlas láimhe lais 'na ór,
an bhráighe ar ais ag iompódh.

8. [Even] if he (i.e. Aodh Óg) may have got each contract that ever was from Ireland to the men of *Oirghialla*, he will not take them [hereafter]; let he who desires these contracts undertake them.
9. If the original benefit of [such a] contract had been investigated, then it would not be (*lit.* is not) continued, for without the aid of Mag Mathghamhna, such a contract is not beneficial.
10. Often has he quelled a haughty man's conceit: pride cowers through fear of Mag Mathghamhna.
11. A man of his deeds warrants the alliance of high kings, and it is no small honour to receive from him [the position at] his shoulder in return.
12. If one were to humbly request [the return of] a hostage from Mag Mathghamhna, the hostage would return fettered in chains of gold.

8 a ariamh A

10 c an u. P d mheig (*quatrain missing in A*)

11 b áird riogh A airdríogh P c níor ('s om.) P d na MSS

12 b sirthuigh A: sirthea P c na hór P d abhráighe A

13. I gceannas Chríche Banbha
dá mbeith rí gan fhreasabhra;
ní fhoil acht géill ar ghiallaibh
mar soin ón fhéin Oirghiallaigh.
14. Uime nach áireómha sinn
sochair Oirghiall ar Éirinn –
aithnidh dhamh iad re haimsir
nár ghabh siad na sochairsin.
15. Ionann más fhíor na leabhair,
uaisleacht a ngéag ngeinealaigh;
fa choimhriaghail is cobhuigh
Oirghiallaigh is Eoghanaigh.
16. Ionann ceart ar chlár Banbha
d'Ó Néill is Mhag Mathghamhna;
acht ceannas don té is treise,
do gheallas é d'inneise.
17. Muna leantaoi leatrom sgéal
ar fhionnfhuil Eachach Doimhléan,
síol Néill ní neasa do rath,
do réir fheasa na n-eolach.

13. If there were an uncontested king ruling the land of *Banbha*, [even] then would there not be (*lit.* there is not) such a submission of hostages from the warrior band of the *Oirghialla*.
14. It is for this reason that we shall not recount the rights of the *Oirghialla* over Ireland – [for] I have known for long that they have not undertaken such contracts.
15. If books are true, the nobility of the *Eoghanaigh* and the *Oirghialla*'s lineages is the same regarding governance and tributes.
16. Ó Néill and Mag Mathghamhna have equal rights to Ireland, except that the strongest may have leadership – this I have promised to proclaim.
17. Had the biased accounts not been heeded (*lit.* followed) about the fair kindred of Eochaidh Doimhléan, the O'Neills would not be (*lit.* are not) nearer grace in the lore of the learned.

13 *a críche A c ní bhfuil A : fuil P d sin P*

14 *a aireobha P b oirghialla P (quatrain missing in A)*

15 *a fíor MSS b an g. P geinealaigh P c cubhuigh A: cubaigh P*

16 *b sdo mhagmathghamhna A c ceannas gan P d dfiaghneisi A*

17 *b fhionnfhuil A*

18. Fuaras cúis nach cuirthe i suim
ar ainbhíos luchta an leatruim;
do ghéabha i laoibh sa leabhar
sgéala dhaoibh re deimhneaghadh.
19. Inneósad dhaoibh go nua a-nois
seansgéala Catha Cnámhrois;
níor ghabh mé acht eól go hinnill –
a seól ní hé íslighim.
20. Inneósad athaidh eile
oighidh Fhiachaidh Sreabhtheine;
sgrios an ainbheasa madh áil
dom aighneas a fhios d'fhagháil
21. Fiachaidh Sraibhtine 'sé i gcath,
torchair le Breasal mBéalach;
ní dár dtaobh bhias á bháthadh
mar aon 's a dhias dearbhráthar.
22. Clann Ríogh Éirionn – anba an sgéal –
Eochaidh is Eathach Doimhléan –
do-ghéabha talluinn re dtaoibh
do sgéala ar chlannuibh Cathaoir.

18. I have found a case which has been ignored because of the ignorance of the biased ones – in the poems in the book, you will find stories which confirm this.
19. I will tell you now afresh the old stories of the battle of *Cnámhros*; I have only admitted secure knowledge – I lower not their sail (i.e. I do not disparage them).
20. I shall tell once more the of the fall of *Fiachaidh Sreabhtheine*; should I desire to attain the counsel of these tidings, [this would cause] the eradication of ignorance.
21. It was by *Breasal Bealach* that *Fiachaidh Sraibhtine* fell in battle; not for our cause were [*lit. are*] he or his two brothers overcome.
22. [These] sons of the king of Ireland were *Eochaidh* and *Eathach Doimhléan* – great the story. One would receive bestowals of land for [such] tales about the descendants of *Cathaoir*.

- 18 *a nar chuirthe* P *cuirthe suim* A *b ainbhfeas* A *lucht* A: *lochta* *c ghéabh* A: *gheabha* P *a láoi* MSS *d an sgéal* A *daoibh* A
- 19 *a tiocfad tharra go nua nois* A *b cnaimhrois* P *c do ghabh mé déol* A: *ní gheibh mé* P *d ní seadh* P *go nislighim* A
- 20 *a inneósfad* A *b oigheadh* A *fhíacha* A *c do sgrios meolsa* P *d eólusa* P *aighneas* A
- 21 *a fiacha* A *sreabhтин* (*final 'e' expunged*) *b torchar* P *béalach* A *c mbathadh* A
- 22 *a Rí* MSS *c ghéabh:* A *gheabha* P *thalluin* A *d an sgéal* A

23. Trí mhíle curadh san chath,
torchair re Breasal mBéalach;
a n-áireamh fire is sé sin
ar sé mhíle do mhíltibh.
24. Naoi míle – gá mó pudhar? –
díoth ó gCuinn san chathughadh;
gé tugadh ár orthaibh sin,
torchair a lán do Laighnibh.
25. Cnámhros do-chluintear á ghairm,
ón chathsin fuair an forainm –
iúl mar sin ní mé mheallfas;
is é a-dir an dinnseanchas.
26. A lucht léaghtha na leabhar
'ga bhfuil gach iúl d'fhoillseaghadh,
más ar sgéalaibh bearar breath,
féaghaigh an Leabhar Laighneach.
27. Tar éis léighthe na leabhar,
ní husaide mh'éileaghadh;
léigfe mé uile an t-eólas
fa luighe an té thoigeóras.

23. Three thousand champions fell in the battle to *Breasal Bealach*; this is their true count, when added to six thousand.
24. Nine thousand of the descendants of *Conn* were lost in the battle – what greater misfortune? Although they themselves were slaughtered, many of the *Laighin* also fell.
25. It is heard said that *Cnámhros* got its name from that battle – lore such as this I shall not falsify: the *dinnseanchas* proclaims it.
26. O readers of books who are beholden to reveal all knowledge, if judgements are made based on stories, look [then] to the Book of Leinster.
27. After having read the books, I am not easily refuted; I will reveal all the knowledge under oath to whomever desires it.

23 *a* ccath P *c* an á. MSS *d* shé

24 *a* pudhair P *b* díth A sa A ccathughadh A: ccathughadh P *c* ór P oruibh P
d torchuir A

25 *a* chluintí P *b* ccathsin A *d* asé P deir A: dir P

26 *a* léighthe A *b* ghach A *c* bearthur A breith P *d* fechaidh P

27 *a* eis P léaghtha P *b* mfhcilioghadh P *c* léigfidh A *d* ar P toigeoras P

28. 'Ceathra bliadhna Colla iar gcath
'na airdrígh tolcha Teamhrach',
an rannsa créad fár cumadh,
más bréag dhamhsa a ndubhramar?
29. Do ghabh ceannas Chláir na bhFionn,
Colla Uais darbh ainm Cairioll;
ní caol an ród a riaghail
d'Aodh Óg agus d'Oirghiallaibh.
30. 'Na aghaidh – ní hadhbhar teinn –
a bhfuil 'na éagmais d'Éireinn;
ris féine a bhfuair fa Ghallaibh
Éire as uair dá n-agallaimh.
31. Dá dhúthaigh Bóinn is Banna,
's a bhfuil d'aibhnibh eatarra,
fuinn chnódhonna i ngealann grian;
tóranna fhearann Oirghiall.
32. A n-abraim is adhnáir linn,
muna furtacht é d'Éirinn,
téid sinn i dtaitheach teangadh,
aithreach linn ar luaidheamar.

28. 'Colla was high king over the mounds of Tara four years after [the] battle': If all I have said is untrue, about what then was this verse composed?

29. Colla *Uais* whose name was *Cairioll* – not direct [was] his pathway to governance – took dominion over the Plain of the Fair (i.e. Ireland) for the *Oirghialla* and Aodh Óg.

30. Against him [now] are all who are lost to Ireland – no cause for hardship; to him alone belongs all that he took amongst the Foreigners of Ireland from the time of his dealings with them.

31. The Boyne and the Bann – and all rivers in between – are part of his patrimony; the borders of the country of the *Oirghialla*, [those] brown-nutted lands in which the sun shines.

32. If what I say is not for the good of Ireland I would consider it shameful; I would (*lit.* will) atone for my talk and would regret all that I have mentioned.

28 *a trí bl.* A

29 *c ní om.* A *ar ariaghail* d'Áodh Óg (*d om.*) P

30 *b éagnas* A *c féin* MSS *d* is MSS úair A *hagallamh* P: *hagallaimh* A

31 *a nduthaigh* P *c line:* go seanfhonn oiligh ní an A a gealann P *d line:* fearann cloidhimh na colladh A fearoinn P

33. Banbha muna bheith fa chion,
dá leantaoi lorg na sinnsíor;
is duid ba dúthaigh Eamhain –
cuid dot dhúthaigh dheigheanaigh.
34. Dá bhfaghtá mar fríoth romhuibh
ceannas Chóigidh Conchobhair,
luach t'fhéile ní bhfuighe a-mháin,
's do thréighe uile d'fhagháil.
35. Do chlú ós cionn gach aoinfhir,
luach is fhearr ar dh'íolmháoinibh;
a bhfuair tusa ar son na séad,
usa ná an crodh do choiméad.
36. Gan ghrádh d'ionnmhus nó d'eallach
aguibh nó dá aithearrach;
ní sibh cealgthar ar an gcrodh –
mealltar mar sin an saoghal.
37. Ní bhí comhla réd chridhe
ag anmhuin re himpidhe;
ní déine é iná h'eineach,
an té is fhéile d'impeidheach.

33. If Ireland were not in servitude, [and] if the precedent of the ancestors were followed, yours would be the district of *Eamhain*, which was part of your recent patrimony.
34. If you were to gain – as was gained before you – the headship of *Conchobhar's Plain*, you would receive not only the worth of your generosity itself, but also that of your other virtues.
35. Fame above all men is the best exchange for your great bounty; all that you have received in place of these treasures is easier to keep than wealth.
36. You have no regard for treasure, or kine, or other such things; you are not allured by wealth, [though] the whole world is thus deceived.
37. Your generosity knows no bounds as you attend to entreaties; even the man who is most generous to supplicants does not surpass your liberality.

33 a fa *achion* A: *chionn* P b leantuigh A c dúiche A d dhuithe A

34 a fríth A: frí P b cóigidh MSS conarbhair P c ní *om.* P uile P mháin A
d dot thréighe uile a fhagháil P

35 a ghach A b fearr A: féarr P thiolmháoinibh A d Line: ní husa crodh a
choiméad A

36 b Line: agad acht a aithearrach P

37 a lead ch. A c no he. A d féile MSS

38. Ní taisgeadha ar a dtéid glas
do sheoid uaisle ná h'ionnmhas;
teagh séad Uí Chuinn gan chomhlaidh
do bhuing a n-éad d'ollamhnaibh.
39. Ní taisgeadha téid a-mugha,
más fíor d'iúl gach éarlumha;
atáid ar cuimhne ag Aodh Óg
fuighle na naomh a-nallód.
40. Éireannaigh is Clann Cholla
– 's ní d'iomarbháigh eatorra –
téid i leith ar fhéile d'Aodh
gé do bheith Éire d'éantaobh.
41. Ní fairsing croidhe dá mhéad
do rún croidhe meic Mairghréag;
dá fhéile go dtí a thogha
'na rí, is Éire in aontomha.

TEXTUAL NOTES

- 1a *fa chroidhe* This idiom is uncommon in Classical poetry. I have taken it to mean 'by generosity', roughly following Carney (*Butlers* no. IX q. 1): *Rath fā chroidhe chumus Día / ōs ē a bhreitheamh, / dā gach áon don uile fhear, / sáor na cruinne dā ccreidtear* 'It is in proportion to each man's generosity that God, the maker of the universe in whom men believe, apportions (*lit.*

38. No locked up hoard are your precious valuables and resources: the doorless treasure house of the descendant of Conn has taken away the jealousy of chief poets.
39. These treasures are not wasted, according to the knowledge of all the saints: Aodh Óg remembers the sayings of the ancient holy men.
40. Irishmen and the descendants of Colla have a (*lit.* and a) matter of contention between them: Aodh will succeed (*lit.* it goes to one side for Aodh) [in this contention] even if [all] Ireland is united [against him].
41. No generosity, no matter how great, is bounteous enough for the son of Margaret's darling (i.e. *Éire*); until he is chosen as king for his bounty, Ireland [will be] celibate.

38 a na t. P taisgidhe P b Line: a shéoid úaisle no ionnmhas A na hionnmhas d héad P

39 a na P taisgidhe P b diuil

41 c féile P d aontogha P (*quatrain missing in A*)

fashions) prosperity, because (in this matter) Christ is his Brehon'. The structure *fa* + *noun* meaning 'according to *x*' is attested elsewhere in Classical poetry e.g. McKenna (1919) q. 1a, q. 2cd, q. 56d., *Butlers* no. IX, q. 1a., *A. Ó Dálaigh* no. 10, q. 2b.

comhaitheas This word is derived from the legal term *comaithches*. Kelly (1991, 233 n. 23) explains that the true legal meaning of this term comes from *com-aithech* 'fellow rent-payer', and not from a compounding of *comaith* 'equally good' and *gnás* 'custom, practice' as is stated in *Corpus iuris Hibernici*. I have taken the translation of 'co-tenancy' from *AL* p. 70. In the context of the present poem, it seems that *comhaitheas* references the practice of land being divided and held according to *Bretha Comaithchesa*. Charles-Edwards (104) has written of these laws that 'the doctrine enunciated there was that neighbourhood [i.e. *comaithches*] was partible inheritance amongst kinsmen'.

- 1c *roinn* the reading from *P* here, i.e. 'rún' is sound, and may offer an alternative meaning to *cd*, namely 'the secret / intention of everything a man may attain is that it is given to him an account of his generosity'. I have chosen 'roinn' from *A*, as it is more in keeping with the general sense of the quatrain that a man's 'share' of a kingdom is dependent upon his own generosity.
- neith* this reading from *A* was chosen instead of 'neithe' from *P* as it avoids the metrical fault of 'rofhad', while ensuring perfect rhyme with *leith* in line *d*.
- 2a *chridhe* 'chroidhe', found in both MSS has been edited to 'chridhe' to ensure perfect rhyme with the corresponding *d'áiridhe* in *b*. For 'cridhe', see *IGT* I §83, II §§2, 3 etc.
- 2b The reading from *P* here is 'atá ag aon dáiridhe', while the reading from *A* is 'ge tá ag ghach aón dáirighe'. I have opted for the latter reading from *A*, as it offers a meaning more fitting with the rest of the quatrain i.e. 'which each particular [person] has' instead of 'which one particular [person] has'.
- 2c Both *P* and *A* give the reading 'bhfuighe', which has been emended to 'bhfoighe' to ensure perfect rhyme with 'chroidhe' in *d*.
- 4c For *téigh* + *i dtarbha* meaning, 'to benefit' or 'to profit', see *DDána* no. 15, q. 2c., *MD* no. 11, q. 2b., *D.Mh. Uidh* no. 10, q. 6a., *Fl.Earls* p. 82, ll 5–6.

- 4d *fhlaitheas* The reading 'mhaitheas' from *P* is metrically sound, and supports *breacadh* for this quatrain. The reading of *fhlaitheas* from *A* has been preferred, however, on grounds of meaning, as it allows for the continued discourse regarding the relationship between *fhlaitheas* and *maitheas* as per qq 1, 3.
- 5a *níorbh fuláir* For this, meaning 'not too much', see *DIL* s.v. *foróil* (*d*).
- 5b *Inis Laoghaire* Regarding this Bardic name for Ireland, see also *DDána* no. 77, q. 8b., no. 74, q. 69b., *Bard.Misc* no. 253, q. 17b., q. 37b. *Laoghaire* may be identified with the son of Niall Naoighiallach (*L.Bran* s.v. 'Laoghaire'). See also *Leb.Gab.iii*: §614.
- 5cd This translation comes from the suggestion of an anonymous reader. For *eite*, meaning 'borderland', see *AithdD.* no. 39, q. 30d.
- 6c *ós cionn* *P* gives 'os ccionn', and *A* gives 'os a chionn'. The eclipse on *ceann* as found in *P* is contrary to *BST* and *IGT*. The presence of 'a' (poss. pron. 3rd pers. sing.) in *P*, while not metrically intrusive, provides an unclear meaning. *IGT* presents no examples of lenited *ós chionn* but consistently gives 'ós cionn / ós cinn' i.e. *IGT* II §§2, 12, 31, 53, 12; III §80. I have therefore provided the reading *os cionn*.
- 7b *fóid Iugoine* For this *Ioghaine*, see *TD* II p. 211, §16.
- 8 The translation for this quatrain is tentative. The idea of a contract between Ireland and a given prince, which emerges in this quatrain reappears in q. 31, is also found in q. 22 of *Treóin an cheannais Clann Dálaigh* by Gofraidh Óg Mac an Bhaird: *Conn Céadchathach na dtreas dte, / le neart gliadh tárraidh treise, / gur shnaidhm ceartchuir bruaigh Bhanbha, / le buaidh nearthmhair nathardha* (Conn Céadchathach of the warm conflicts reached power by force of strife, so that he bound the just contracts of Banbha with strong venomous victory) (McKernan, 14–15); for this see also *Duan. Mh. Uidh* no. 1, q. 8ad-9ab. In the present quatrain, Mag Mathghamhna may be refusing these contracts, in favour, perhaps, of the Contract of Salvation which he fulfils by his generosity.
- 8c *dá bhfaghadh* For this, *P* gives 'dá bhfaghadh', which provides alliteration with 'hé', and while there are examples of this eclipse of *f* as *bhf* in *IGT* I pp 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12 and 18, none

of these occurs at the beginning of a word that is alliterating with another word beginning with *fh* or a vowel. It is difficult then to accept this reading from *P*, as it cannot be established with confidence that it adheres to Classical Irish orthography or to the metrical requirements of the poem. *IGT* III §22, shows that vocalic variants beginning in *-agh* and *-ogh* were permitted for *-fagh* and *-fogh* in *do-gheibh*. Given this, a reading 'dá n-aghadh', which is identical in meaning to the readings from the MSS, and which adheres to the metrical requirements of the poem, might be theoretically possible. I have found no examples, however, of vocalic variant forms such as *dá n-aghadh*, *dá n-oghadh* etc. following the conjunction 'dá'. In the absence of a satisfactory conjectural reading, then, I have provided 'dá bhfaghadh' from *A*. This reading does not give alliteration in *c*, but rhymes perfectly with its partner 'gabhadh' in *d*, and is also orthographically sound.

a héirinn A reading of 'a néirinn [= in Éirinn]' meaning 'in Ireland' would perhaps provide better sense. On this point, it may be noted that *P* has the incorrect reading of 'h' instead of 'n' in q. 38*d*. Given then that both MSS give readings of 'h' where 'n' might be more appropriate, it may not be unreasonable to suggest that a common textual ancestor also contained this mistake, or at least that a common textual ancestor contained renderings of the letter 'n' in which the ascender went above the x-line, thus causing scribes to interpret it as a 'h'.

8*d* *thoigéaras* This is the relative *é*-future of *tocraid* 'desires to go, seeks a way, chooses' *DIL*; *Bar.Syn.Tr* 189.20.

9*a* *inleanta* For this, meaning 'continuable', see *TD* no. 13. q. 42*c*.; *LCAB* no. 9, q. 10*c*.

9*d* *chongnamh* This is unlenited in both MSS, but lenition has been inserted here in accordance with Classical usage as per *IGT* p. 4. l. 36 and *Bar.Syn.Tr* 214.31–2.

10*b* *míneaghadh leis* for *mínigh*, meaning 'quell, tame', see *DIL* s.v. *mínigid* (*b*); *TD* no. 15, q. 50*c*, *MD* no. 48, q. 2*b*.

11*ab* These lines refer to the right of the King of the Oirghialla to sit on the right hand side of the king of Tara, for which see *Lebor.Cert* ll 1063–4, 1113–14 and *ACP* v. 49.

12*b* *dá sirtheá* MS *A* here gives 'sirthuigh', presumably a non-Classical rendering of a pass. subj. form giving the meaning '[if

a hostage] were sent'. The *-gh* ending of this form precludes the elision of the following proclitic 'ar', thus leaving eight syllables in the line. The reading from *P* '[dá] sirtha' giving the 2nd pers. cond. 'if one would send' is preferred as it facilitates the elision of 'ar' and gives the correct line length of eight syllables.

- 12c *lais* this 3 sg. form of 'le' is found in both MSS, and is needed to ensure perfect rhyme with *ais* in *d*. For other examples of the present spelling, see *IGT* II §§2, 11; *IGT* III §§16, 106 etc.

'na ór MS *P* here gives 'ina hór' presumably indicating a belief that *glas* was a feminine noun, with its predicate *ór* requiring a *h*-prothesis after the poss. pron. 3 sg. fem. *a* in 'ina'. *IGT* §96, however, shows that *glas* 'a lock' was considered a masculine *o*-stem, and therefore should be preceded by the poss. pron. 3 sg. masc., without a *h*-prothesis, as in 'na ór' as per *A*. On these grounds, I have chosen the reading from *A*.

This line may refer to the legend that if any of the chiefs of Clann Cholla, the ancestors of the Oirghialla, were taken as hostage and shackled, then their shackles should be made of gold, cf. *Lebor.Cert* ll. 1168–71; *TD* no. 9, qq 27–9. In keeping, perhaps, with this statement from *Lebor Cert*, the name *Oirghialla* has been construed to mean 'golden hostages' by means of a lengthening of its initial syllable, which was historically short (*TD* II, pp 228–30, 233). For the most recent discussion of the name *Airgialla*, of which *Oirghialla* is a Classical Irish version, see Bhreathnach (2005, 95).

- 13c *foil* The MSS readings for this are *fuil* (*P*) and *bhfuil* (*A*). I have edited this to *fhoil* to ensure perfect rhyme with *soin* in *d*.
- 13b *chriche* For this, *P* gives *chriche* while *A* gives *críche*. I have preferred *P*'s reading as it adheres to the rule stated by McKenna in *Bard.Syn.Tr* p. 267 that 'gens. like *cláir*, *fuinn*, *fóid*, &c. preceding a gen. of a proper name . . . are usually lenited'.
- 13cd These two lines are echoed in *TD* no. 9, q. 22: *Adeirid éolaigh fóid Bhreagh / nach fuil ag rígh Guirt Ghaoidheal / d'anáir acht géill ar ghiallaibh / d'fagháil ón féin Oighiallaigh* (The learned ones of Bregia's land say that the king of the Field of the Gael gets no further homage from the warriors of the Oirghialla than an exchange of hostages).
- 14a *áireómha* MS *P* here gives 'aireobha sinn'. The *-eo* in 'aireobha', although lacking a length mark, may indicate that an

-eó future form was intended here. This quatrain is missing from *A*, and in the absence of a second textual witness or metrical confirmation for spelling, I have tentatively rendered this as an -eó future form of *ad-rimi*, for which see *IGT* III §68.

- 15a *fhíor* As per *Bard.Misc* no. 214, q. 16a, I have amended 'fíor' from the MSS to *fhíor* for alliteration.
- 16d *d'inneise* MS *A* gives this as *dfiadhneisi*, which is presumably intended as a verbal noun derived from *fiadnaise* 'witness, testimony' *DIL*. I have not found any other examples of this form. *P* gives *innisi*, which does not conform to the metrical requirements of the poem. I have provided the reading *inneise*, loosely based on *P*. This form is not given in *IGT*, but is found elsewhere in Classical Irish poetry, i.e. *AithD* no. 98, q. 7b; *DDána* no. 107, q. 4d and *LCAB* no. 48, q. 5c.
- 17b *Eochaidh Duibhléan* Son of Cairbre Lifeachair and ancestor of the Oirghialla, for whom see MacNeill §62.
- 18a *cuirthe i suim* For *cuir(the)* + *i* + *suim*, meaning 'heeded', see *IBP* no. 33, q. 1b, no. 14, q. 4b, no. 55, q. 8a.
- 19a *Inneósad* For this, *A* gives 'tiocfad tharra', a sound variant which perhaps means 'I will mention'. For *tar* (verb) + *t(h)ar* (prep.) giving 'mention / speak of' see *DIL* s.v. *do-icc* II (c) *TAR*.
- 19b *seansgéala Catha Cnáimhros* This is the story of the battle of *Cnám(h)ros*, which took place after *Breasal Bealach* refused to pay the *bóramha*, 'cattle tribute', to Cairpre Lifeachair, king of Tara, without a battle. After this refusal, Cairpre mustered Leath Choinn and marched to Cnámros, while Breasal went to enlist the help of the *fian* of Find mac Cumhail. After some poetic deliberation, Find's *fian*, 'warrior band', joined battle on the side of Breasal to help defeat Cairpre Lifeachair, slaying nine thousand of the men of Leath Choinn and three of Cairpre's sons, namely Eochaidh, Eochaidh Doimhlén and Fiachu Roptene [*al. Sraibhtine*] (*Bor.* §§22a–36).
- 19c *níor ghabh* *P* here gives 'ní gheibh mé'. This form is ungrammatical, as in Classical Irish a dependent form in *-f(h)agh* or *-f(h)ogh* should be expected after the negative particle *ní* (see *IGT* III §22), and the 1st pers. act. pres. analytical form suggested here is not permitted in Classical Gaelic grammar. The reading *ghabh* is supplied from *A*.

- 19d Both copies of the poem are corrupt here, which makes the second couplet of this quatrain difficult to translate. The line as given in *A*, i.e. 'aséol ní hé go nísleighim', is hypermetrical, and the version in *P*, i.e. 'a seól ní seadh ísleighim', does not rhyme with *c*, while also giving the dubious reading 'ní seadh'. Given then that the text is defective at the same place in both witnesses, one might reasonably assume that either (a) they were copied from a common source that was itself corrupt or difficult to decipher at this part of the text, or (b) they were copied from separate sources that were in turn copied from a perhaps common source that was corrupt or difficult to decipher at this point in the text. Either way, it may be suggested that the text as transmitted to both *P* and *A* has been corrupted, thus opening up the possibility of a conjectural emendation. I have rendered this line 'a seól ní hé ísleighim', roughly based on *P*. I cannot be sure that I have accurately conveyed the meaning of *seól*, but consider that the sense intended here is similar to that in Breatnach 1973 q. 7ab: *Trī rīgh do rīoghaibh fer bhFáil / tērna mar sin, seól tocráidh* 'Three of the kings of the men of Ireland perished thus (miserable course)'. The translation of *ísleighim* as 'I discredit' is tentative.
- 20cd These lines differ greatly in *P* and *A*. I have based my edition of the lines on *A*, with *aighneas:ainbheas* instead of *meólsa:eólusa* (*P*) as the use of *aighneas* 'advice, counsel' *DIL* allows for the continuation of the pseudo-legalistic argument from the preceeding quatrains.
- 21a-d See textual note 19b above.
- 21b *torchair le* *A* gives 'torchuir' and *P* gives 'torchair'. I have emended this to Classical *torchair*, as in *IGT* III §21. *Breasal mBéalach* *A* here gives uneclipsed *Béalach*. There was no definitive rule in Classical Gaelic to eclipse an adjective following a noun in the accusative unless the noun was governed by an article (*SnaG* IV, §3.3), and McKenna (1941, 56) states that following masculine nouns in the accusative singular after preposition without the article 'eclipsed and non-eclipsed epithets are about equally common.' I have chosen the reading from *P* with an eclipse following Knott's statement in *TD* I, ciii-iv that 'when the adj. follows a noun directly preceded by a prep. eclipse is generally shown in good MSS when the prep. is one of those which governed only the acc. in the earlier language'.

This *Breasal*'s obit is given in *AU* 435.1, though O'Rahilly in *EIHM* 17–18, n. 2 thought that this date was perhaps too late. Gwynn *Metr. Dind* III, 503 has also pointed out that this obit may be incorrect, as *Cairbre Lifechair*, who is said to have fallen at the Battle of *Cnámros*, is given an obit of 284 in *FM*. If the obit of *FM* for *Cairbre Lifechair* is taken as correct, then he and *Breasal Bealach* cannot have been contemporaries.

- 22b *Eochaidh is Eathach* In *LL* II 38360–5, the three sons of Cairpre Lifechair are named as *Eochaid & Eochaid Domlén & Fiachu Roptene*. In *AFM* 323.1; *IGT* I §52; *Geneal.Reg* pp 28, 66, as well as in our poem, *Eathach* is also used as a spelling for *Eochaidh*. For this, see Ó Mainnín, textual note on 33bc.
- 22c *do ghéabha* A gives *do ghéabh*, which seems to imply a third person verbal form. As it is difficult to establish the agent of such a 3rd pers. sg. form in this or the previous quatrain, I have chosen the 2nd pers. form *do ghéabha* based on *P*.
- 22d *Clannuibh Cathaoir* These are the families descended from Cathaer Már, the ancestor of the Laighin, and the grandfather of *Breasal Bealach*; see *EIHM* pp 268–9. Unlenited 'cathaoir' is given in *A*, while a lenition is supplied in *P*. Breatnach (1973, textual note 14a), has noted that the survey of initial mutations in Classical poetry carried out by McKenna (1941) illustrates that there was no concrete rule regarding lenition of proper nouns in the genitive. I have chosen the unlenited reading from *A* based on unlenited examples of *Cathaoir* following *chlannaibh* from *RIA* MS 23 F 16 l.7 and *ADV* MS 72 l 44 f. 8r l.9.
- 23cd The number of slain at the battle of *Cnámhros* is also given as nine thousand in *A Chóic.Chó.* q. 14c, *Bor.* §36 and in *Corp.Gen* §327, while *Metr. Dinds.* III no. 17, q. 12 gives nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine.
- 24a *gá mó* For this, meaning 'such great / how great', see *IBP* no. 32, q. 9c.
- 24b *ó gCuinn* These are the descendants of Conn Céadchathach, among whom were Cairpre Lifechair and Eochaidh Doimhléan cf. *Ir.Kings* p. 280.
- 25a-d See note on 19b above.
- 27d *fá luighe* For this, meaning 'under oath (to)', see *DIL* s.v. *luighe* (b). A reading of *fá luighe don té thoigeóras* in *d* possibly

gives better sense, as *léig*, when meaning 'let go, release', is most often used intransitively with the preposition *do*. See *DIL* s.v. *léicid* (*d*).

- 28a This seems to echo the line *cethri bliadna Colla iar cath* in *Gilla Cóem*. §1, q. 144c. Given that this seems to be the poet's source, I have chosen the reading 'ceathra bliadhna' from *P* instead of 'trí bliaghna' from *A*.
- 29a *Cairell* One of the three sons of Eochaidh Doimhléan who, along with his two brothers Muireadhach (*al.* Colla-Fo-Chrí) and Aedh (*al.* Colla Mend) was given the sobriquet *Colla* cf. *Corp.Gen* §§ 74-5. For the most extensive discussion of the Three Collas, see Schlegel, who suggests the three Collas may have been Romano-Briton soldiers.
- 30c *féine* Both MSS give *féin*. However, the extra syllable 'e' is required here to ensure perfect rhyme with *Éire* in *d*, as in *Bard.Misc* no. 213, q. 30c. This emphatic form of *féin* is not, to my knowledge, found in *IGT*, but is widely attested elsewhere in Classical Irish poetry, e.g. in *TD* no. 24. q. 1c and *DDána* no. 97. q. 27c.
- 30cd *fa Ghallaibh Éire* In the annals from the thirteenth century onwards, the term *Gaill Éireann*, 'Foreigners of Ireland', denoted the Norman / Hiberno-Norman settlers, especially those who dwelt in the Pale (see *AU* 1222.0, 1315.5, 1380.5, 1425 etc). This couplet may be a reference to Aodh Óg Mag Mathghamhna's raid in 1486 on the twenty-eight towns of *Galldacht Machaire Airghiall* 'The *Galldacht* of the Plain of Oriel' (see *AFM* 1486.36).
- 31ab This couplet is very similar to *DDána* no. 96, q. 5ab: *Innbhear Bóinne agus Banna / is gach fonn dá bhfuil eatorra*. These lines are from the poem beginning *Foraire Uladh ar Aodh* attributed to Maol Sheachluinn na nUirsgéal Ó hUiginn, who probably composed it around 1424 on Aodh Mág Aonhghusa; see Ó Riain 2008, 5 n. 8.
- 31a-d *TD* no. 9, q. 35 seems to be based on this quatrain, i.e. *Éirne is Fionn, Bóinn is Banna, / 'sgach tír dá dtá eatorra - / fuinn chnódhonna i ngealann grian - / tóranna d'fhearann Oirghiall*. This borrowing by Tadhg Dall happily supplies us with a more satisfactory reading for *cd* than that in *P*. In *P*, *cd* reads as *fuinn cnó dhonn a agealann grian / toranna fearoinn oirghiall*. As it

seems likely that Tadhg Dall based his quatrain on an earlier version than that found in our witness (written c. 1687), I have seen fit to emend these lines in keeping with Tadhg Dall's. As a rhyming pair, *cnódhonn(a)* / *tórann(a)* are also found in *DDána* no. 111, q. 8*bd* and in *TD* no. 17, q. 50*cd*; see also Bergin 1914, 27–8.

31*cd* *A* here gives 'go seanfhonn oiligh ni an / fearonn cloidhimh na ccolladh' (to the old land of Oileach [...] / the swordland of the Collas).

31*c* *chnódhonna* *P* here gives the unlenited *cnódhonna*. I have provided lenition as per McKenna 1941, 52 and *TD* no. 9, q. 35*c*.

33*a* *fa chion* I am in agreement with *Bard.Misc.* no. 214, q. 33*a*, in regarding the reading 'chionn' here with final *-nn* as being erroneous: *cion* with a single *-n*, as found in *A*, allows for the given reading 'fa chion', which is translated here as 'in servitude' as per *DBM* no. 3, q. 2*b*.

33*c* *duid* The reading for this from the MSS is *duit*. It has been edited to *duid* to ensure perfect rhyme with *cuid* in *d*.

34*a* *frioth* Following Mac Cárthaigh 2003, p. 105, note 2*a*, I have emended *frí P: frith A* to *frioth* to conform with Classical Gaelic spelling as in *IGT* III §22.

34*b* *chríche* Both manuscripts give unlenited 'críche'. For the addition of lenition here, see note 13*b* above.

34*cd* A reading based on *A* for these lines has been preferred here. *P* here gives 'luach tfhéile uile a mháin / dot threighe uile a fhághail', the meaning of which is unclear to me.

35*a* *aoinfhir* I have preferred the reading 'aoinfhir' from *A* to unmetrical 'aonfhir' from *P*.

35*b* *fhearr* Neither MS witness supplies lenition here. As per *Bard.Misc.* no. 214, q. 35*b*, I have added lenition for alliteration with 'íolmhaoinibh'.

36*b* The reading from *P* 'agad acht a aithearrach' may imply the meaning 'you have no love for wealth or kine but (rather) the opposite' for *ab*. I have been unable, however, to find any examples from Classical poetry that support *aithearrach* meaning 'the opposite' in this way. I have opted for the reading 'aguibh nó dhá aithearrach' from *A*, with *aithearrach* here meaning 'other (wealth)', as in *aithearrach (c) DIL* and in *IBP* no. 13, q. 12*c*.

- 37a *chridhe* Both MSS here give *chroidhe*. I have emended this to *chridhe* for rhyme. See note 2a above.
- 37b *anmhuin re himpidhe* For this meaning 'attend to an entreaty', see *Dán Dé* no. 15, q. 7b.
- 37c *fhéile* Both MSS here give *féile*. As per *Bard.Misc* no. 214, q. 37c, I have inserted lenition here for alliteration.
- 37d *impidheach* There seem to be three possible translations of this word: (a) an intercessor, as in *DDána* no. 84, q. 6b, no. 7, q. 7d, or (b) a 'suitor', as in *TD* no. 19, q. 11a, or (c) 'one who entreats', coming from *impidhe* (cf. *DIL* s.v. *impide*). Given the context of this quatrain, where Aodh Óg's munificence is being extolled, it is likely that the translation provided, based on (c) above is most appropriate.
- 38a The reading from *A* in this line 'Ní taisgeadha ar a ttéid glas' has been preferred to that of *P*, which is 'Na taisgidhe ar a ttéid glas', as it echoes *c* in this quatrain, and fits more satisfactorily with the general premise of these lines, i.e. that the munificence of Aodh Óg knows no boundaries.
- 39a The reading from *A* 'Ní teasgeadha téid amugha', i.e. 'the treasures are not wasted' is preferred to that of *P* 'Na taisgeadha téid a mugha', i.e. 'the treasures *are* wasted', as it supports the main thesis of the poem that the bestowal of wealth is the key to advancement on earth and in heaven. This line is hypermetrical in both manuscripts.
- 40 I am indebted to Dr Gordon Ó Riain for his advice on this quatrain. The translation here is tentative, and I have not found any other examples of 'téid i leith do *x*' meaning '*x* succeeds', but the general sense of the quatrain, as translated here, is in keeping with the central thesis of the poem that Aodh Óg is a worthy leader owing to his generosity.
- 41d *aontomha* The manuscript is very smudged at this point, though a reading of *aontog<ha>* as in *Bard.Misc.* no. 214, q. 41d seems possible. Such a reading may suggest a meaning of 'unanimously'. I have emended it here to *aontomha*, i.e. *oentama* *DIL* 'unmarried state, celibacy', as this better suits the sense of the quatrain.

ABBREVIATIONS

- AC *Annála Connacht: the annals of Connacht (a.d. 1224–1544)*. Edited by A. M. Freeman. Dublin 1944.
- ACP E. Bhreathnach and K. Murray, 'The Airgialla charter poem: edition' in *The kingship and landscape of Tara*. Edited by E. Bhreathnach. Dublin 2005.
- Acallamh W. Stokes, *Acallamh na Senórach* in *Irische Texte* 4 (1). 1900.
- A Chóic.Chó. M. O Daly, 'A chóicid Chóin Chairpri crúaid' *Éigse* 10 (1961/63).
- AFM *The annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters*. Edited by J. O'Donovan. 7 vols. Dublin 1848–51.
- AithD. L. McKenna, *Aithdioghluim dána*. 2 vols (ITS 37, 40). Dublin 1939–40.
- ALC *The annals of Loch Cé*. Edited by W. M. Hennessy. 2 vols. Repr. Dublin 1939.
- A.Ó Dálaigh L. McKenna, *Dánta do chum Aonghus Fionn Ó Dálaigh*. Dublin 1919.
- AU *Annála Uladh: annals of Ulster*. Edited by W. M. Hennessy and B. MacCarthy. 4 vols. Dublin 1887–1901.
- Bard.Misc D. McManus and E. Ó Raghallaigh, *A bardic miscellany*. Dublin 2010.
- Bard.Syn.Tr L. McKenna, *Bardic syntactical tracts*. Dublin 1944.
- BL Cat R. Flower and S. Hayes O'Grady, *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts in the British Library*. 2 vols. Dublin 1926.
- Bor. W. Stokes, 'The boroma' *Revue Celtique* 13 (1892).
- BNnÉ C. Plummer, *Bethada náem nÉrenn*. 2 vols. Oxford 1922.
- Breacadh T. S. Ó Máille, *Breacadh: ornáid ar an duanaireacht*. Baile Átha Cliath 1973.
- Butlers J. Carney, *Poems on the Butlers*. Dublin 1945.
- Caithr. CC A. Bugge, *Caithreim Cellachain Caisil*. Christiania, 1905.
- Corp.Gen M. O'Brien, *Corpus genealogiarum Hiberniae*. Dublin 1962.
- Dán Dé L. McKenna, *Dán Dé: the poems of Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh and the religious poems in the duanaire of the Yellow Book of Lecan*. Dublin 1922.
- DBM C. Mháig Craith, *Dán na mbráthar mionúr*. 2 vols. Dublin 1980.
- DDána L. Mac Cionnaith, *Dioghluim dána*. Baile Átha Cliath 1938.
- DIL *Dictionary of the Irish language: based mainly on Old and Middle Irish materials*. Dublin 1913–75.
- D.Mh. Uidh D. Greene, *Duanaire Mhéig Uidhir*. Dublin 1972.
- EIHM T. F. O'Rahilly, *Early Irish history and mythology*. Dublin 1999 (1957).
- FFÉ D. Comyn and P. Ó Duinnín, *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn: the history of Ireland by Geoffrey Keating D.D.* 4 vols. Dublin 1987 (1901–14).
- Fl.Earls P. Walsh, *The flight of the earls*. Dublin 1916.

- Geneal.Reg* P. Walsh, *Genealogiae regum et sanctorum Hiberniae* in *Archivium Hibernicum* 5 (1916).
- Gilla Cóem.* P. Smith, *Three historical poems ascribed to Gilla Cóemáin*. Münster 2007.
- IBP* O. Bergin, *Irish bardic poetry*. Dublin 1970.
- IGT* O. Bergin, *Irish grammatical tracts I–V*, supplement to *Ériu* 8–10, 14, 17 (1915–55).
- Ir.Kings* F. J. Byrne, *Irish kings and high kings*. Dublin 2003 (1973).
- L. Bran* S. Mac Airt, *Leabhar Branach: the book of the O'Byrnes*. Dublin 1944.
- LCAB* T. Ó Donnchadha, *Leabhar Cloinne Aodha Buidhe*. Baile Átha Cliath 1931.
- LL* R. I. Best, O. Bergin, M.A. O'Brien, *Book of Leinster*. 5 vols. Dublin 1954–67.
- Leb.Cert* M. Dillon, *Lebor na cert: book of rights*. London 1962.
- MD* T. F. O'Rahilly, *Measgra dánta*. 2 vols. Dublin and Cork 1927.
- Metr. Dind* E. Gwynn, *The metrical dindshenchas*. 5 vols. Dublin 1903–35.
- MGF* P. Ua Duinnín, *Me Guidhir Fhearmanach*. Baile Átha Cliath 1917.
- O'Hara* L. McKenna, *The book of O'Hara: leabhar Uí Eadhra*. Dublin 1951.
- Onom.* E. Hogan, *Onomasticon Goedelicum locorum et tribuum Hiberniae et Scotiae*. Dublin 1910.
- PGBMM* N. Williams, *The poems of Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe*. Dublin 1980.
- PH* R. Atkinson, *The passions and the homilies from Leabhar Breac*. Dublin 1887.
- Poem.Airg.* M. O Daly, 'A poem on the Airgialla' *Ériu* 16 (1952).
- RIA Cat.* *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy*. Dublin 1926–70.
- Scéla Láí B.* W. Stokes, *Tidings of doomsday* in *Revue Celtique* 4 (1879–80).
- TD* E. Knott, *The bardic poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn*. 2 vols (ITS 22, 23). London 1922–26.

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NIOCLÁS MAC CATHMHAOIL

Ollscoil Uladh